

CHRISTIAN

THOUGHTS

F O R

Every D A Y

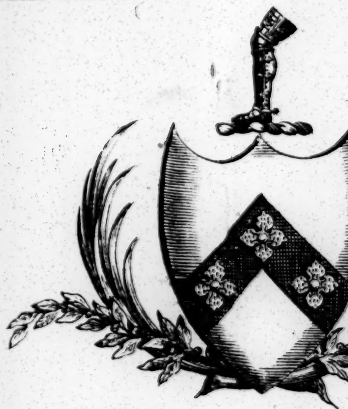
O F T H E

MONTH.

Done out of *French*.

Printed in the Year 1698.

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CHRISTIAN
THOUGHTS

FOR

Every DAY

OF THE

MONTH.

Done out of *French*.

Printed in the Year 1698.



THE
AUTHOR'S
Advertisement.

THE reading of these Discourses, requires neither much Application, nor much Time. They are plain Thoughts, short and easie, which may be understood without difficulty, and read with less than a Minutes expence. These Thoughts are not purely Moral, respecting only the Duties of Natural Honesty, as do those of Epictetus and Seneca: They are Christian Thoughts, which have for their Object the most important Verities of the Faith and the Highest Maxims of the Gospel.

These Thoughts are not only proper for those that live retired, and

The Author's

are frequently exercised in Prayer; but for those also that are engaged in the World and little versed in things above: For even those very Persons that are most strongly tied to the Earth, may sometimes raise their Eyes to Heaven. How great, or how embarrassing soever a Man's employ may be, he may yet every Day have leisure enough for one Moments reading: and if the urgency of our Business permits us not to make regulated Meditations, we may at least every Day take one good Thought, before we apply ourselves to our Affairs.

The Design of this little Book is, to furnish you with Thoughts for every Day of the Month. For to make good use of these Thoughts, the following Method is to be observed.

In the Morning after you have adored God, and settled yourself in his Presence, read the Thoughts of that Day; but read
them

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them leisurely that you may understand them thoroughly. If you have a little time, pause upon the first Article, before you pass on to the second. Be not contented with a simple Apprehension of the Truth or Maxim you have read; Penetrate it, relish it, and make Application of it to your self. If your Affairs be too pressing, you may rest satisfied with only reading them. Christian Thoughts have the same operation upon Souls, that the Seal hath upon the Wax; how little soever they enter into our Minds, they fail not to leave some Impression behind them. If you cannot read these Thoughts in the Morning, nor during the Day, read them in the Evening, before you go to Bed.

The Practise that immediately follows the Thoughts, is important and easie and therefore not to be omitted. An Act of Vertue and a little Reflection, are soon made.

The Author's, &c.

The Passage at the end, are as a Compendium and Extract of the Thoughts of that Day: They in few Words recollect all the Sense and Strength of them. They are short, and easily retain'd; they are touching, are very fit to excite, sustain, and nourish the Soul during the Day. They are Grains of Essence, which contain great Vertue in a little bulk, and Operate much in a little time. When you shall have read over the Thoughts of all the Days of the Month, you must read them over again, that you may understand them perfectly, and make the best Advantage of them. There are always some fresh Discoveries to be made in the Truths of the Gospel. They are Mines that cannot be too often digged into: They are also Seeds, which will not fructifie our Hearts, if they take not deep Root in them.

For

For the First Day of
the Month.

Of Faith.

1. **A**LL that Faith teacheth us, is grounded upon the Authority of God's Word. The Church has learnt from the Mouth of *Jesus Christ*, what she proposes to the Faithful for the Object of their Belief. No Man can go out of the Way, who has Truth itself for his Guide.

2. What avails it for a Christian to have Faith, if he use it not for a Rule of his Conversation? It is a greater Folly to doubt of the Truth of a Doctrine, which God has reveal'd, which so many Martyrs have

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signed with their Blood, which has been confirmed by so many Miracles, and which the Devils themselves have upon so many Occasions confessed; but it is a far greater Folly to believe this Doctrine true, and to live as if we doubted not but it were false. It is to believe, as do the Devils, not to live conformably to our Belief.

Faith then shall henceforth be the Principle of my Actions, and the Rule of my Life: Whatever that condemns, I absolutely condemn, maugre all the Repugnances of Nature. I will on all Occasions oppose the Maxims of the Gospel against those of the World. What saith the World? That I must follow mine Inclinations, that I must suffer nothing, &c. But what saith *Jesus Christ*? He saith quite contrary. Who now is most to be

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be credited? *Jesus Christ*, or
the World?

Give God thanks that you
are a Member of his true
Church, and say your Creed
distinctly, as if you were to
make a solemn Profession of
your Faith.

Auge nobis fidem. Luc. 17.5.

O Lord, increase our Faith.

*Quid prodest, si quis Catholice cre-
dat, & Gentiliter vivat? Petr.
Dam.*

What avails it a Man to have
a Christian Faith, and lead
an Heathenish Life.

For the Second Day.

*Of the End, for which Man
was Created.*

1. **G**OD alone is our last
End; he could not
A 5 create

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create us but for himself: Our very Heart dictates to us, that we are made only for God; and we cannot contradict it, without betraying our own Nature.

2. Every one ought to have what belongs to him; let us then be God's, since we belong to God: If we are his not willingly, as his Children, we shall be his whether we will or no as his Slaves. We must of necessity live either under the Empire of his Goodness, or under the Empire of his Justice; chuse which you like best.

3. Every thing ought to tend to its End, and to act according to its Nature. If the Sun which is made to enlighten us should deny his light to Men, he would be as if he were not; or rather he would be a Monster in the World. Thus there is nothing more useless, or
more

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more monſtrous, than an Heart, which being created only for God, is not wholly his. Do I behave my ſelf as a Creature that is made only for God? Are all my Thoughts, and all my Actions, directed unto him? Alas! How few things do I, which I can truly ſay are for God! What make we upon the Earth, if we perform not the only Affair for which we are placed therein?

Take here a Reſolution to ſearch only after God, and to rob him of nothing that appertains to him.

Dominus meus, & Deus meus.

Joan 20.

Ah, thou art my Lord, and my God.

Totum te exigit, qui totum te fecit. St. Auguſt.

He that hath made you all that you are, may juſtly require of you that you be wholly his.

For

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For the Third Day.

Of Death.

1. **A** Christian has great reason to fear Death, when he lives not like a Christian. What Account is to be given after a worldly and sensual Life! What a regret will it be, to have lost all the Opportunities of our Salvation! O sad Death to die the Enemy of God! O funest Moment, which gives an End to Temporary Pleasures, and a beginning to Eternal Pains!

2. What would I at the Hour of Death that I had done? Let us do that now, which we shall then wish to have done. There is no time to be lost: Every Moment may be the last hour of Life; the longer we have lived, the nearer we are to our Grave:
Our

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Our Death is so much nearer,
as it has been delayed.

2. What Judgment shall I
make of the things of this
World, when I must forsake
them? Let us at present take
Counsel of Death, who is
faithful, and will not deceive
us; What will become of this
Beauty, this Money, this Plea-
sure, this Honour? What esti-
mate will be made of them at
Death? During this Life we
are deceiv'd by appearances; at
Death, things are seen as they
are. Man living esteems this
World; dying he despises it.
Whom ought we to believe,
Man living, or Man dying?
Ah! How small a Matter, will
the World appear to us by the
light of that Torch, which will
enlighten us on the Bed of
Death! But Alas! we shall
then no longer have time to
undeceive our selves.

Think upon what you should
most

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most fear if you were to die presently, and take order there in as soon as may be. Accustom your self in every Act of the Day, to do what you would do if you were to die as soon as it is done. Above all keep this Practise in the Use of the Sacraments.

Uno tantum gradu ego Morsq; dividimur. 1 Reg.

I am perhaps but one step from Death.

Christino crastinum non est. Tertul.

A Christian has no Day that he can call to Morrow.

For the Fourth Day.

Of the last Judgment.

1. **O** My Sovereign Judge!
I must then one Day

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appear before your Tribunal, there to be judged according to the Ill or Good which I shall have done in this Life. I believe the Truth as firmly, as if the Trumpet had already sounded for to awaken all the Dead.

2. What shall we say at the sight of so many Evil Thoughts, of so many Criminal Actions, of so many Slighted Graces? O how terrible will be the Day of our Lord's Wrath, when all shall be discovered, even to the most secret Motions of our Heart; when all shall be accounted for, even to the shortest Moments, and least Sigh; and when no abatement shall be made! The Just will scarce be found just, what then will become of Sinners?

3. What Sentence ought an impenitent Sinner to expect from an inexorable God? O dread-

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dreadful Sentence! Go ye *cur-*
sed, &c. Alas! O Lord, whi-
 ther shall these unhappy Ones
 go, to whom you give your
 Malediction? To what part
 of the World will you have
 them retire themselves, since
 they must go from you? Where
 can be so funest an Abode? To
 be banish'd from the presence
 of God, to be accursed of God,
 what a Portion is this!

Think your self presented
 before the Tribunal of *Jesus*
Christ, and accused of what
 you will be most ashamed of:
 Think well thereon, and re-
 member that the most secret
 Sins will become public at the
 Day of Judgment, if they be
 not effaced by Penitence.

Ante faciem indignationis ejus
quis stabit? Naum. 1.

Who can stand before the
 Face of an irritated God?

Vae etiam laudabili vitæ hominum,
si remota misericordia discutias
eam. St. Aug. Unfor-

Unfortunate is that Life, how regular soever it be, which you, O my God, shall examine without Mercy!

For the Fifth Day.

Of Heaven.

1. **H**Heaven! O how great is that Word! He that says Heaven, says the Ablegation of all Ill, the Collection of all good, the Master piece of God's Magnificence, the Price of *Jesus Christ's* Blood, The Accomplishment of all the Desires of Man's Heart, and something more than all this.

2. To see God clearly, and such as he is, in his Glory, to love God without Measure, to enjoy God without fear of ever
losing

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losing him to be happy with the felicity of God himself; this is the Object of my Hopes. Ah! I have but a few days of exile and Pilgrimage, and then I shall eternally be with him whom my Soul loves.

3. What matters it where we are here below, so we be with *Jesus* to all Eternity? Can I with justice complain of suffering a little pain, that I may obtain an infinite Felicity? The Martyrs bought Heaven with the Price of their Blood, and yet beleived that the Purchase cost them nothing. O blessed Eternity! did Men but truly know thy Value.

Stir up in your self an ardent desire to see God, and at the Sight of Heaven, look up on the Earth with Contempt. Did your Thoughts but seriously reflect upon Paradise, you would neither admire nor
fear

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fear any thing in this World.

Satiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua.

Pfal. 16.

My Heart will not be wholly
satisfied, till I see God in
his Glory.

Si Labor terret, merces invitet.

St. Bern.

If the Labor affright us, let
the reward encourage us.

For the Sixth Day.

Of Hell.

1. **H**OW great an Horror
should we have of
Hell, could we but hear the
lamentable Cries of the Dam-
ned ! They sigh, they groan,
they roar like wild Beasts, in
the midst of the Flames ; they
accuse themselves of their Sins,
they bewail them, and they de-
test

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test them, but it is too late. Their Tears serve only to augment the heat of that Fire, wherein they burn without being consumed. O! how rigorous, and withal, how unavailable is the Penance of the Damned !

2. Never to see God ; to burn in a Fire, whereof ours is but the shadow ; to suffer at one and the same time all sorts of Miseries, and that without any Comfort, without any relaxation ; to have always Devils before ones Eyes, always Rage and Despair in ones Heart ; what a wretched dying Life is this !

3. These Miserable Ones are enraged, that they have had so many Opportunities of being Saved, and have neglected them. The Remembrance of their past Pleasures is one of the most sensible of their Torments ; but nothing

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is more terrible to them, than that they cannot lose the Remembrance of that God, whom they have lost by their neglect.

Descend in Spirit into Hell; enquire of the Damned what it was that brought them thither: Question them about their present Estate; and learn of them to fear God, and shun the danger you are in.

Quis poterit habitare de vobis cum igne devorante? II. 33.

Which of you, O Sensual Souls, can live in devouring Flames?

Ardor Gehennæ ardorem extinguit Luxuriæ. St. Isidor. Pelus.

The Fire of Hell extinguisheth the Fire of Concupiscence.

For

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For the Seventh Day.

Of the Eternity of the Torments of Hell.

1. **C**AN the Wrath of God proceed any farther, than to punish those Pleasures, whose duration is so short, by Torments, which never shall have end? To be unhappy, as long as God shall be God, how great is that Unhappiness? Is it not enough, that the Miseries of the Damned are extreme? Must they also be Eternal? The Prick of a Pin is but a very slight Sore; yet were the Pain thereof to continue for ever, it would become insupportable: What then will this be?

2. **O**, Eternity! When a Damned Person shall have shed as many Tears, as would suffice

ice to make up as many Rivers and Seas as are in the whole World, should he shed but one every Hundred Years, he will, after so many Millions of Years, have advanced no farther, than if he but then began to suffer. He must begin again anew, as if he had already endured nothing; and when he has begun again, as often as there are Sands upon the Sea Shore, Atoms in the Air, and Leaves in the Forests, all this will be accounted for nothing.

3. The Damned are not only obliged to suffer during all Eternity, but every Moment also of their Sufferings is to them Eternity it self. Eternity is always present with them; Eternity is an Ingredient in all their Torments; they have always this in their Minds, that their Sufferings will never end. O cruel Thought! O deplorable

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rable Estate! An Eternity of burning, an Eternity of wailing, an Eternity of raiging! O that we could conceive this, as the Damned do!

Make an Act of Faith, concerning the Duration of the Pains, wherewith the Divine Justice punisheth one Mortal Sin. We must at least believe, what we cannot comprehend. It is a great unhappiness for a Christian, not to be perswaded of the Eternity of Hell Torments, but by his own Experience.

Ibit Homo in domum aternitatis suae. Eccl. 12.

The Sinner after his decease shall go unto his Eternal abode.

Periisse semel aeternum est. Incert. Auth.

He that is once Damned, is so for ever.

For

For the Eighth Day.

Of the Presence of God.

1. **G**OD at this instant be-
holds me, as if there
were none but I in the World;
or rather he is in me, as an
Eye infinitely enlightned,
which observes me, and from
which nothing can be con-
cealed. He sees me with
the same Light, wherewith
he comprehends himself, and
with an Application of Mind
so strong as if he ceased
to contemplate himself, for to
study and search me to the
bottom. This I believe, and
adore God present, and thus
acting in me.

2. It is a Thousand times
more shame to me, that my
Sins should appear in the sight
of God, than to have them ex-
posed to the view of the whole
World.

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World. Would you do that before a Servant, which you do in the Presence of the King of Kings? What a blindness is it to fear so much the Eyes of the World, and so little the Eyes of God?

3. All the Darkness of the Night is not thick enough to hide us from the Light it self: The most remote and most solitary Retirements, are filled with the Divine Majesty. What need we shun the company and sight of Men? We find God every where.

Place your self in the Presence of God, and see if there be nothing in you which may be offensive to his Eyes. Endeavour to accustom your self to the practice of the Presence of God; it is an Effectual Remedy against Sin. God sees me; there needs no more than this Reflection to restrain you, when you are in the heat of your Passion.

Oculi

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Oculi mei semper ad Dominum.

. Psal. 24.

I have always our Lord before
mine Eyes.

*Si peccare vis, quare, ubi non te
videat Deus, & fac quod vis.*

St. Aug.

If you have a mind to Sin,
seek out a place where God
cannot see you, and then
do what you will.

For the Ninth Day.

*Of Disobedience in our
Selves.*

1. **T**Here is nothing a Man
ought to fear so much
as Himself: His own Weak-
ness ought to be more formi-
dable to him than all the Pow-
ers of Hell. There needs but

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one sigh, but one word, but one look to vanquish him. *Adam* sinned, *Solomon* forgot God, *St. Peter* denied *Jesus Christ*. What will become of the Reeds, if the least Wind overturns the Cedars!

2. Man is for the most part overcome without ever being attacked; our Passions and our Senses every Moment conspire against us; our own Heart is our most dangerous Enemy. Those whom Persecutions could not shake, have fallen in the Desert: After they had overcome both Tyrants and Devils, they were themselves conquered by their own Concupiscences. Have a Care of trusting too much to your self.

3. The greatest Saints have trembled at the only thought of the state of their Souls before God. Anchorites and Penitents have been heard sigh

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sigh at the Hour of their Death, in expectation of the formidable Sentence of Divine Justice ; not knowing what they were, or what might become of them. There needs but one Moment to make a Saint become a Reprobate.

Say with St. Philip Neri, Have a Care of me, O Lord, this Day ; for if you leave me to my self, I shall betray you.

Qui se existimat stare, videat ne cadat. 1 Cor. 10.

Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.

Quamvis sis in tuto, noli esse securus. St. Bern.

Although you are in a place of assurance, do not yet think your self secure.

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For the 10th Day.

Of the Horrour of Sin.

1. **H**OW great a loss it is to lose God! Men think themselves undone when they lose their Goods by a Suit of Law, by the breaking of their Debtors, or by some other Accident. What then is it to lose an Infinite God? Wretched is that Soul, which by one Sin loseth his God; but much more wretched is that, which sets at light the losing of God.

2. O Sin, how frequent art thou among Men, and yet how unknown to Men! In sporting and recreating our selves, to make our selves the Object of God's Wrath, what Sport, what Recreation is this? God, who is nothing but Love, infinitely hates the
Sin-

Sinner. To hate a little, is to wish one a little ill ; to hate to the Death, is to desire ones Death ; but to hate infinitely, is what cannot be by us comprehended. What do we fear, if we fear not this terrible Hate of God !

3. The sight of Mount *Calvary*, is certainly a very dreadful Spectacle ; yet the state of a Soul, deprived of Grace, is far more dreadful than that of a God dying upon a Cross. *Jesus* died only to destroy Sin : Sin strikes more Horrour into him than Death.

Endeavour to get a true Sorrow and Compunction for your Sins. Of all your losses, weep only for that of Grace ; because there is none but that, which can be repaired by Tears.

*Quem fructum habuistis in illis,
in quibus nunc erubescitis ?*
Rom. 6.

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What have you gained by all your Sins, more than the shame to have committed them?

Væ animæ audaci, quæ speravit, si a te recessisset se aliquid melius habiturum. St. August.

Wo to that audacious Soul, that running from you, O my God, hopes to find a better Object.

For the 11th. Day.

Of the Care of our Salvation.

1. **T**HE Business of Salvation is properly Man's Business: Every thing else is to be accounted as nothing. The Enterprises of Princes, the Intrigues of Courts, Wars, Negotiations, &c. are but Amuse-

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Amusements and Toys for Children. Our only important Affair is to serve God, and work our own Salvation. Herein consists all the Wealth, all the Perfection, and all the Happiness of Man. We are no longer Rational, we are no longer Men, if we neglect an Affair the Consequences whereof are so great, the Success whereof is so uncertain, and the loss whereof is so irreparable. What blindness, what stupidity is it, to take so much care how to live, and so little how to live well! To mind so much the making our Fortune, and so little the obtaining our Salvation! What doth it profit a Man to gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul?

2. All Creatures were made only for our Salvation: They become unprofitable when they are not made use of for this purpose. Thus when Man

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ceases to labour for his Salvation, the Sun ought no longer to shine, the Heavens ought to stand still, the Earth ought no more to bring forth any Fruit for him, the Angels ought to abandon him; or rather, all Creatures ought with him again to be annihilated. He is not worthy to live, when he lives not for God.

3. The greatest part of Men in the mean time, think of nothing less than how they may be saved: They take Care for every thing but their Salvation. They would have every thing bring them some profit: This Money must be put out to Interest, this Land must be better Manured, the Rents must be Advanced. They lament all Losses, except that which is irrecoverable. They are at great Expences for their Bodies, but
bestow

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bestow nothing on their Souls. We live as if our Soul were none of ours, as if it were the Soul of our most mortal Enemy, as if it were the Soul of a Beast; or rather, as if we had no Souls at all, or else had one only that we might lose it.

Take a Resolution to save your self at what rate soever, and imitate Pope *Bennet* the Twelfth, who being requested by a King to do somewhat that was unjust, said, *Had I two Souls, I would give one of them for this Prince; but having but one, I am resolved not to lose it.*

Unum est necessarium. Luk. 10. There is but one thing necessary.

*Ubi Salutis damnum est, illic utiq;
jam lucrum nullum est.* S. Euch.

There is no benefit to be expected, where we cannot find that of our Salvation:

It

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If we lose our Soul, we lose
All.

For the 12th Day.

*Of not delaying our Con-
version.*

1. **I** Have too long delayed
to give my self to God.
It looks as if I endeavoured
to escape out of his Hands.
Is it then a disgrace to be his?
Is it a shame to put an end
to a shameful Life? Can we
too soon have a Beauty that
is infinitely amiable? To Mor-
row, to Morrow. And why not
to Day? Why not this very
Hour? Will my Chains to
Morrow be more easie to
break? Will my Heart be
then more soft? No, without
doubt: Time, which decays
every

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every thing else, strengthens ill habits: By delaying the Remedy, we render the Disease incurable.

2. What is it that hinders us from following the Voice that calls us to Penance? What is it that frightens us? I grant that it is difficult to change our Course of Life: But what ought not a Christian to do, that adores a Crucified God, and hopes for Eternal Happiness by him? If we have any thing to fear, it is the abuse, we make of God's Graces.

3. Shall I delay? Is the future time in my power? Am I Master of it? God with patience expects me; it is true, the Scripture says it; but it tells me not how long I have to live. He that has promised Pardon to the Penitent, has not promised to Morrow to the Sinner. Perhaps I shall
have

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have time ; but perhaps also I shall have none. Is not that Man Mad, who will ground his Salvation upon a Perhaps ?

Reflect upon the long time that you have delayed to give your self to God, and tremble at the sight of the danger wherein you are.

Dixi, Nunc capi. Psal. 79.

The Resolution is taken , I will this very Hour begin to serve God.

Nulla satis magna securitas, ubi periclitatur eternitas. S. Greg.

No Security can be too great, when Eternity is at stake.

For the 13th Day.

Of Humane Respects.

1. **T**HE World talks : Let it talk. Shall the babbling

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ling of Fools hinder you from being wise? But what will People say? They will say, that you fear God more than Men. The greatest Libertines will esteem you in their Soul, and will say to themselves, that you have reason for what you do. But what matter is it what Men say, provided you do your Duty, and God be pleased?

2. What a Cowardice it is to be ashamed of the Gospel! We glory to wear the Livery of a Prince, and are ashamed to wear that of *Jesus Christ*. The most contemptible Mechanicks make a publick Profession of their Trade in the World; and Christians dare not appear Christians in the Church. The Son of God will before his Father be ashamed of that Soul, which has been ashamed of him before Men.

2. And

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3. And what? Has the Adorable *Jesus* any thing to be ashamed of? Is His Name infamous? Is it a Disgrace to follow his Maxims and his Example? You are not ashamed to be Licentious, to be a Blasphemer, you even glory in it; but you are ashamed to be Holy and Virtuous. However, let the World say what it will, he is the honestest Man, that serves God the most faithfully, and makes the highest Profession to serve him.

Ask your self, Whether this Phantom of the World does not affright you, and hinder you from satisfying all the Obligations which Christianity requires at your Hands.

Non erubescō Evangelium. Rom.

I.

I am not ashamed of the Gospel.

Quid

*Quid times fronti tua, quam signo
Crucis armasti? S. August.*

He ought to fear nothing, to
be ashamed of nothing, who
bears upon his Forehead
the Sign of the Cross.

For the 14th Day.

Of the Use of Grace.

1. **W**E have not the least
Grace, but what Je-
sus bought for us with the Price
of his Blood, and begged for
us of his Father, when he sur-
rendred up his Soul upon the
Cross. To neglect a good
Thought, which comes to us
from Heaven, to stifle an In-
spiration, which incites us to
do well, is to tread under foot
the

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the Blood of *Jesus*; it is to render the Benefit of his Death of no use.

2. We are indebted to God not only for the Graces we have received, but also for those he intended to give us, had we put no Obstacle thereunto. The Sun shines, we shut our Windows, we are not therefore the less obliged to him for his Light; it is our own fault we make not use of it.

3. It is perhaps above Twenty Years, since God has been Inspiring into you Things which you have not yet the Courage to perform. To be so long a time in the Holy Ghost's School, and to make no Improvement; to be so often Solicited, Reprehended, and Threatned, and yet to do nothing! Let us remember that God is a Creditor, in whose Debt no Body Breaks;
and

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and that if he exacts not presently the Payment of our Debts, he will require great Interest for the Forbearance; and in fine, That there is a certain Measure of Graces and Sins, after which God withdraws himself.

Give Thanks to the Holy Ghost for all the Graces he has bestowed on you: Beg Pardon of Him for not having always Faithfully made use of them: Hearken to what he says to you at present, and fear, that if you neglect doing what he Inspires into you, he will at last forsake you.

Cui multum datum est, multum quæretur ab eo. Luc. 12.

To whom much is given, much shall be required of him.

Gratiam sequitur Judicium. St. Basil.

Grace is followed by Judgment.

For

For the 15th Day.

Of the Use of Time.

1. **T**HE loss of time is one of the greatest Disorders of the World. This Life is so short, every Moment thereof is so Precious, and yet we live as if it would never have an End, or as if we had nothing to do in it.

2. Alas! had a Damned Soul but One Only Moment of all that Time which I squander away, what use would he make of it? In every Moment of my Life I might gain an Eternity of Happiness. We let not slip any Opportunity of Diverting or Enriching our Selves; but we continually lose the Opportunities of our Salvation.

3. That Day is not best employed, wherein you have
made

Christian Thoughts. 39

made the greatest Progress in your Temporal Affairs; but that wherein you have done most good Works, and where-with God is best pleased. So order your self, that when ever you shall be askt what you are doing, you may answer, I am doing the Works of God and my Salvation.

Renew in your self the Resolution you have taken, to serve God faithfully; and lay it close to Heart, that all time is lost, which is not spent in God's Service.

Nemini dedit spatium peccandi.
Eccles. 15.

God allows no time for Sin.

*Vacat tibi ut Philosophus sis, non
vacat ut Christianus sis.* St.
Paulin.

You have time enough to Study Philosophy; but you have no time to Practice Christianity.

For

For the 16th Day.

Of the Use of the Sacraments.

1. **T**HE Sacraments are the Conduit-pipes which convey unto us the Blood and Merits of *Jesus Christ*: They are the Sources of those Graces that are most necessary for our Salvation. When they are abused, the Merit of *Jesus Christ* are rendered useless, and our Salvation is made impossible.

2. To abuse the Sacraments, is to hinder their Effect, by the ill Disposition wherewith we approach them. How much reason have we to fear! So many Confessions, and so little Amendments? To eat so often the Heavenly Food, and continually lead a Sensual Life!

Christian Thoughts. 41

A Christian, who has once worthily Communicated, has strength enough to undergo Martyrdom: What State then are you in!

3. That which ought to make us tremble, is, that when we receive the Body of our Lord without a true Sorrow for our Sins, we eat, as saith *St. Paul*, our own Judgment, and incorporate in us (as we may say) our own Damnation. What will become of us, when we must make reparation to the Blood of *Jesus Christ*, which we have so often profaned by Unworthy and Sacrilegious Communions!

Consider what has been amiss in your Confessions and Communions, and endeavour so to dispose your self, as doth a sanctified Soul, that never approaches the Sacraments, but as if she were to depart this World immediately after the receiving them. *Pro-*

For the 16th Day.

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42 *Christian Thoughts.*

Probet seipsum homo. 1 Cor. 11.

Let a Man try himself.

*Penitentibus dico, Quid prodest,
quia humiliamini, si non mutua-
mini? St. Aug.*

I speak to the Penitents, What
are you the better for being
humbled, if you are not al-
so changed?

For the 17th Day.

Of the Eucharist.

1. **T**HE Eucharist is a
Commemoration and
Renewing of the Sacrifice of
the Cross. Hereby we re-
present in our Churches, what
was once done upon Mount
Calvary. I can do nothing
more pleasing to God, than
to be a frequent Partaker of
this Holy Myſtery; which that
I may worthily be, I muſt u-
nite

Christian Thoughts: 43

1. nite my Heart with *Jesus Christ's*, for to offer them both to God.

2. We offend God every Hour, and our Sins merit no less than infinite Pains. How shall we satisfy the Divine Justice, but by presenting thereunto the Sufferings of our Lord, instead of those which we are indebted? All the Austerities of the Penitents, all the Torments of the Martyrs, all the Afflictions of the Miserable, cannot discharge the least of our Debts without the Sacrifice of the Cross, the Merits whereof are applied to us by this Commemorative-Sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist.

3. Apparently God could not suffer unpunished so much Wickedness in the World, did he not see in the midst of the most Licentious Towns, a continual Celebration of

C

this

44 *Christian Thoughts.*

this Memorial of his most Blessed Son's Immolation upon the Cross. The representation of this Well-beloved Sacrifice stays the Arm of his Justice. If our Sins cry for Vengeance, the Blood of *Jesus* cries for Mercy. Let us adore the Son of God, who was Sacrificed for us, and let us go often to pay him our Homage at the Feet of his Altars. What a shame it is, that the Church, which is his Court, should be so desolate, while the Palaces of Earthly Princes are so thronged with People!

Take a Resolution of going frequently to Holy Communion, and that with such Reverence, as is due to so Sacred a Mystery. Go therefore unto the Church, as if you were going to Mount *Calvary*, for to be present at the Death of *Jesus Christ*.

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*In omni loco sacrificatur, & offer-
tur Nomini meo oblatio munda.
Malach. i.*

In every place (saith God)
there is Sacrifice, and an
Holy Offering is made unto
my Name.

*Tunc vere pro nobis hostia erit
Deo, cum nosmetipsos hostiam
fecerimus. St. Greg.*

Jesus will then be truly a Sa-
crifice for us, when we shall
have sacrificed our selves to
God.

For the 18th Day.

Of Alms.

1. **H**OW much are we o-
bligated to Jesus Christ,
for affording us the Means to
do him good by substituting

46 *Christian Thoughts.*

the Poor in his place. He is in the Eucharist, to augment our Devotions, and to nourish the Faithful. He is in the Poor, to attract our Compassion, and to be nourished by the Faithful. Happy is the Man that gives Alms to *Jesus Christ*; but unhappy is he that refuses it. You feed your Dog with your own Hand, and you let *Jesus Christ* Die for Hunger. What Injustice! what Barbarity is this!

2. What is given to Great Persons, is most commonly lost; what is given to God, is never so. He returns all with Interest, he repays all liberally, even to a Glass of cold Water. Gaming, Luxury, and Debauchery, have Ruined a Thousand Families; giving of Alms never yet Impoverished One. To do good to the Poor, is certainly a great

Christian Thoughts. 47
great Art of gathering Rich-
es.

3. Men at the Day of Judgment shall be Sentenced according as they have dealt by the Poor. What will so many Rich Misers answer, when the Poor shall accuse them? When *Jesus Christ* himself shall reproach them with their Hardness of Heart, saying, *Go ye Cursed into Everlasting Fire: For I was Hungry, and ye gave me not to Eat; I was Naked, and ye Cloathed me not.* &c. An Heart hard to the Poor, is a Reprobate Heart; on the contrary, a Soul truly charitable, is a Soul predestinated. What can our Judge say against us, when he shall see our Cloaths upon his Back, our Bread and our Money in his Hands? We need fear nothing before the Tribunal of Divine Justice, provided the Poor plead our Cause.

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Consider how you deal with the Poor, whether you treat them as the Members of *Jesús Christ* ; whether you do them all the Good you are obliged to do.

Fæneratur Domino, qui miseretur pauperis. Proverb. 19.

He that pitieth the Poor, putteth his Money to use to our Lord.

Date omnibus, ne, cui non dederitis ipse sit Christus. St. Aug.

Give Alms to all that desire it, lest you should chance to refuse *Christ* himself.

For the 19th Day.

Of Example.

1. **I**LL Example hath Damned more Soules, than all the

Christian Thoughts.

the Saints have ever been able to Save. If Hell were opened, there would scarce one be found, but would say, Such an one has been the Occasion of my Damnation. What account can we give of this? We are commanded to love our Enemies, why do we cause the Ruin of so many Souls, which do us no harm? That Man who has been so unhappy, as to destroy Souls, ransomed by the Blood of God, has great reason to be fearful of his own Salvation. What hopes can we have in *Jesus Christ*, after we have Ravished from him what Cost him so Dear?

2. O ye Parents, who live not like Christians, it were better your Children had never been Born, than to be Born of you! You gave them Life, only that you might give them Death, even Death Everlasting. When they shall ask you

50 *Christian Thoughts.*

for their Paradise at the Day of Judgment, what answer will you make them ?

3. Let us cloath our selves with *Jesus Christ*, according to the words of *St. Paul*, let his Spirit, his Conduct, his Virtues be observed in us, that so those who see us may remember him. We contribute no less to the Salvation of our Brethren by an edifying Life, than to their Damnation by a Scandalous One.

Have a Care you do nothing to Scandalize your Neighbour, and beg Pardon of God for the Sins of others, whereof you have been the Cause. Have we not Crimes enough of our own, without loading our selves with those of others ?

Vae homini, per quem scandalum venit. Mat. 18.

Wo to him by whom Scandal comes.

Christian Thoughts. 51

*Pro tantis reus, quantos secum
traxerit in reatum.* Salvian.

A Scandalous Sinner is guilty
of all the Sins, which his e-
vil Example has occasioned.

For the 20th Day.

Of Suffering.

1. **W**E are not Christians,
that we should be
Rich, and live at ease: There
was no need of Christianity
for this; there was no more
to have been done, but to
have left the World as it was,
under the Empire of Opinion
and Passion. The Christian
Life is a Life of Mortification
and Penance. Unless we love
the Cross, we must renounce
the Faith.

2. What saith the Gospel?
Blessed are those that mourn.

C 5

Wo

52 *Christian Thoughts.*

Wo to you, O Rich Men, that have your Consolation in this World. This is the Language of the Holy Ghost. But this Language seems at present Barbarous, and such as cannot be understood any where but in *Canada, Japan*, and such like places, where the Faithful suffer Martyrdom. This Article of Suffering must be blotted out of the Gospel of *Europe*. Do we believe that Felicity consists in Tears, and that the Rich are unhappy? In the mean time this is an Article of Faith, the belief whereof is no less necessary to Salvation, than that of the Trinity and Incarnation.

3. It was necessary for the Son of God to Die on the Cross, that he might take Possession of his Glory: None of the Saints entered into Heaven, but by the way of Sufferings. Do we expect that what
has

Christian Thoughts. 53

has Cost the Son of God and the Saints so dear, should cost us nothing? The Cross is the Portion and Mark of the Elect. A Soul, which neither suffers, nor is willing to suffer any thing, has the Character of a Reprobate. We must on necessity suffer either in this World or the next.

Adore *Jesus Christ* Crucified, and beg of him the Grace to participate now of his Sufferings, that you may one Day participate of his Glory.

Qui non bajulat Crucem suam, non est me dignus. Luc. 14.

He that beareth not his Cross, is not worthy of me.

Pudeat sub spinato capite membrum fieri delicatum. St. Bern.

What a shame is it to be a delicate Member under an Head Crowned with Thorns?

For

54 *Christian Thoughts.*

For the 21st Day.

*Of Conformity to the Will
of God.*

1. **T**HE greatest Happiness that can arrive to a reasonable Creature, is to will, what his Creator wills. It is truly in this that true Sanctity consists. The Saints are not Saints, but because their Will is conform to God's. What Vertue soever you have if you have not this, you are not truly Devout.

2. That Soul that is not content with what God will, in some sort intrinches upon his Authority. To wish that the things of this World should go otherwise than they do, is to desire that God should not be the Disposer thereof. There is nothing be-
falls

Christian Thoughts. 55

falls us, but by the Order of his Divine Providence. Is it not fit that we should be pleased with all that his Infinite Wisdom ordains?

3. Nothing comes upon me by the order of God, but what is for my good. Should he take up the Knife to kill me, I am certain that his Hand would be guided by his Heart. What can I fear from an Heart that loves me? I will then only, what he wills. I will not complain of Heat, of Cold, of Losses, of Sickneses, &c. All this changes both its Name and Nature by passing through the Hands of God. What the World calls Ill Times, Affliction, Disgrace, is an Advantage, good Fortune and Favour from Heaven, when we consider it in the Order of Providence.

Renounce your own Will, and pray to God that his may be accomplished in you. *he*

56 *Christian Thoughts.*

*Ita Pater, quia sic fuit placitum
venire te. Mat. 11.*

I will have it so, O Father, be-
cause it is your Will.

*Ille placet Deo, cui placet Deus.
St. Aug.*

If we will please God, we must
be pleased with what pleases
God.

For the 22d Day.

Of Confidence in God.

1. **A** Man trusts his Health
to a Physician, his
Law-Affairs to an Attorney,
his Life, if he be blind, to a
Child, and sometimes to a
Dog; and should we make a
difficulty of giving our selves
up to the Conduct of God?

2. The Cares of Providence
extend even unto Ants and
Flies;

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Flies: Why then should Souls fear, that are Created after the Image of God, and Redeemed by the Blood of *Jesus Christ*? God nourishes the Infidels that know him not; he heaps many favours on the wicked that blaspheme his Holy Name: What then will he not do for those Christians that honour and love him?

3. Our Concerns are much better in his Hands, than they would be in our own. Let us leave him to act; he is both our Father and Mother. The tenderness he has for his Children, obliges him to take Care of them. He has promised us his Protection, he will not be worse than his Word. Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before God will suffer a good Man, that has confidence in him, to perish.

Examine your Heart, and see, whether it has a Confidence

58 *Christian Thoughts.*

dence proportionable to the Goodness of God, and Merits of *Jesus Christ*.

Deus meus es tu : In manibus tuis sortes mea. Psal. 30.

Thou art my God : My Lot is in thy Hands.

Projice te in eum, non se subtrahet, ut cadas. St. August.

Cast your self into the Arms of God, he will not go back to let you fall.

For the 23d Day.

Of the Love of God.

1. **G**OD has so loved us, as to give us his only Son. Had he had anything better, he would have given it us. Is not the Purchase of our Love dear enough at this Price ? ~~An~~ indifferent Bounty

Bounty has a Right to be Beloved, why then should not I love an Infinite One? What? Is it ever a whit the less for being Infinite?

2. God commands me to love him: Is it too severe a Command to love a Beauty that is infinitely Amiable? He commands me to love him with all my Heart: Is so Little an Heart too much for so Great a God? But he that says All, excepts Nothing. What part soever I give him, if I give him not all, I give him not enough.

3. Could Eternity have an end, the Devils themselves would not think the Pains of Hell too great, might they by undergoing them, obtain the Grace to love God. There is not one Damned Soul, but would think himself happy, if after innumerable Centuries of Sufferings, he could
but

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but make an Act of Love. I can love God if I will, without its costing me any pain ; Not to do it, when one can, is an Evil greater than Hell it self.

Disavow all other Love besides the Love of God ; and endeavour to the utmost of your power to love God above all things.

Si Charitatem non habuero, nihil sum. 1 Cor. 13.

If I have not Charity, I am nothing.

Si amare pigebat, redamare non pigeat. St. Aug.

If we had any difficulty to love God at first, let us have none to love him, after he has prevented us.

For

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For the 24th Day.

*Of the Love of our Lord
Jesus Christ.*

1. **N**othing ever cost so
Dear as my Soul ; the
Price of it was a Divine Life.
I deserved Hell ; the Devil,
and all Creatures required,
that I should be punished for
my Crimes : *Jesus Christ* heark-
ned only to his own Heart,
which begged of him favour
for me ; he took pity on me,
and gave even the last Drop
of his Blood for to Ransom me.
Thus, did I not belong to God
my Creator, I should belong
to *Jesus Christ* my Redeemer.
The least that I owe him, is
to be thankful to him for the
Good he has done me. If I
give him not Life for Life, I
must at least give him Love
for Love.

2. I

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2. I give a Dog a Bone that signifies nothing to me; For this nothing he loves me, he fawns upon me, he guards me: *Jesus* gives me his Graces, his Blood, his Merits, all his Treasures, and I continue insensible. Learn, learn, thy Duty of a Beast, O ungrateful and unnatural Soul! Thy Dog is thy Master, and thy Judge: If his Example reform not thy Heart, thou art more Brutal than the Beasts themselves.

3. We have our Heart so tender for our Friends, we are so sensible of the good Offices they do us: Shall there be none but *Jesus Christ*, for whom we will have Insensibility and Ingratitude? Which of our Friends was Crucified for us?

Beg that you may love *Jesus Christ*, of *Jesus Christ* himself: We cannot love him without his Grace. *Si*

Christian Thoughts. 63

Si quis non amet Dominum Jesum, sit Anathema. 1 Cor. 6.

If any one loves not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be *Anathema*.

Si totum me debeo pro facto, quid addam pro refecto, & refecto hoc modo? St. Bern.

If I already owe my self to God for having Created me; what have I left to give him for having Redeemed me, and that in so excellent a manner?

For the 25th Day.

Of the Love of our Neighbour.

1. **A** Soul that loves not his Neighbour, cannot truly say that he loves God. Whatever good Works we do,
we

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we do nothing if we love not our Brethren. Martyrdom is Abominable before God without Charity.

2. This is my Command, saith *Jesus*, that you love one another, as I have loved you. Should Men have nothing in them amiable, but that they have been loved by *Jesus Christ*, would not that be sufficient to oblige me to love them cordially? I should be very squeamish, if I should not love what my Saviour has loved more than himself.

3. Do I love Mankind as *Jesus* loved me? That is, am I ready to lay down my Estate and my Life for them? How rarely is this Devotion found in Christendom! And nevertheless it is that of *Jesus Christ*, and consequently of true Christians.

Stir up in your self Sentiments of Tenderness, for those
those

Christian Thoughts. 65

those whom our Lord *Jesus Christ* has so tenderly loved ; and make a firm Resolution never to do any thing, that shall wound the Charity you ought to bear your Neighbour.

Qui diligit proximum, legem implevit. Rom. 13.

He that loves his Neighbour, has fulfilled the Law.

Dilectio sola discernit inter filios Dei, & filios Diaboli. St. August.

Charity alone distinguishes the Children of God from the Children of the Devil.

For the 26th Day.

Of the Love of our Enemies.

1. **C**harity is so proper to Christianity, that we are

66 *Christian Thoughts.*

are obliged to love our very Enemies. *Jesus Christ* gave us both the Precept and Example thereof. God commands, and do we make a difficulty of obeying? God pardons his Executioners for his Death, and cannot we pardon our Brethren for a little Injury?

2. There is no Mercy to be expected for a Soul that refuses to pardon. God will forgive us, as we forgive others. A Christian that will take Vengeance, condemns himself by his own Mouth, as often as he recites our Lord's Prayer. We must love our Enemies; or hate our selves.

3. Christians that hate one another, seem not to be of the same Religion: For what appearance is there, that those who cannot endure one another, should approach the same

Christian Thoughts. 67

same Altar, eat the same Food, believe the same Paradise, and hope to be together for Ever? It is not lawful for us to hate any but the Devils; and it belongs only to the Damned to hate one another. There is not any more formal sign of Reprobation, than not to pardon. A Soul that has this Mark, is marked for Hell.

Search your Heart at the Remembrance of *Christ* Crucified, and if you find in it an hatred towards any Person, take Sentiments of Charity, by Contemplating the Wounds of *Jesus*.

Qui odit Fratrem suum, homicida est. 1 Joan. 3.

He that hates his Brother, is a Murderer.

*Vindicari vis Christianus? Non-
dum vindicatus est Christus.* St.
Aug.

Wilt thou, that art a Christi-
an seek for Vengeance, when

D

Christ's

68 *Christian Thoughts.*

Christ's Death is not yet Revenged?

For the 27th. Day.

Of the Imitation of our Lord.

1. **T**HE first Man ruined himself by presumptuously aiming to be like unto God. None of his Posterity can be saved, but by becoming like the Son of God. He made himself our Pattern, when he took on him our Nature: We must be his Images. He is the Head of the Predestinate; not to resemble him, is the sign of a Reprobate.

2. We with abundance of Care study the Modes and Fashions of the World, and we do not so much as make the least reflection upon the Life of *Jesus Christ*. Courtiers
frame

Christian Thoughts. 69

frame themselves after the Pattern of their Prince: A Philosopher has had Scholars, that have imitated even his natural Imperfections. Have I ever thought seriously upon imitating the Virtues of the Son of God? What a shame is it for me, that I have not yet advanced one step to follow him! What an Affront is it to him to go before us, and to have no Body come after him!

3. What shall I say at the Day of Judgment, when I shall be confronted with my Pattern? When the Life of *Jesus* shall be opposed to mine, his Humility to my Pride, his Wounds to my Delicacies, his Sweetness to my Waywardness, &c? Alas! What a Monster is a Christian without Christianity! Baptized, and a Slave to the Devil! Under the Character of a Cross, a

70 *Christian Thoughts.*

Partaker of the Flesh and the World ! I must then either renounce my Baptism, and Profession of a Christian, or conform my Life to my Saviour's. Christianity, to define it rightly, is nothing but the imitation of *Jesus Christ*.

See if there appear in you any Mark of the Son of God, and whether those that see you act as you do, can take you for a Disciple of *Jesus*.

Magister, sequar te quocunq; ieris
Mat. 8.

My Divine Master, I will follow you whithersoever you go.

Sine causa sum Christianus, si Christum non sequor. St. Bern.
I am wrongfully called a Christian, if I follow not the Footsteps of *Jesus Christ*.

For

For the 28th Day.

Of Zeal in God's Service.

1. **L**ET us have as much Zeal for God as he has for us : Let us labour for our Salvation with as much ardor as he himself doth. All his outward Acts are for the perfection of our Souls. All the Desires of his Heart, all the Cares of his Providence, all the Tenderneſs of his Mercy, tend only to this end. What a ſubject of Confuſion is this to a ſluggiſh Soul !

2. To judge of God by our Lazineſs, one would ſay, that he Merits not to be ſerved, and his Rewards are a very ſmall matter. What Idea can any one have of a Maſter, whoſe Servants ſerve him ſo Lazily, and without Affection ? We diſhonour God, and decry

72 *Christian Thoughts.*

his Service every time we are negligent in performing what he requires of us. Unhappy is that Man who does the Work of God negligently.

3. One Action done for God, how little soever it be, is a thousand times more valuable than all the Acts of Hero's and Conquerours. If we are stimulated with so much Courage in labouring for Vanity, what ought we not to do in working for Eternity? Alas! How the Servants of the Devils are rebutted by nothing! They spare nothing, they never complain what Toil they undergo! Is *Jesus Christ* less considerable than the Devils? Is Paradise less worth than Hell? Ah! Henceforward Hell shall be my School. Is it too much to serve God in the same Measure as the World and Devils are served?

Examine your Conduct in
the

the service of God; take notice in what Actions you shew least Courage, and animate your self to do them henceforward in a manner, worthy of the Master you serve.

*Spiritu ferventes, Domino servi-
entes.* Rom. 12.

Be fervent, it is our Lord that you serve.

*Quales imperus habebas ad Mun-
dum, tales habebas ad Artificem
Mundi.* St. Aug.

Have for the Creator of the World, the same Ardor you have for the World.

For the 29th Day.

*Of the Contempt of the
World.*

1. **W**Hen a Man begins to
mind the World, he
in some sort ceases to be
a Christian. This profane
World, so passionately loved

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for its Grandeurs, for its Pleasures, for whatsoever flatters Self-love, it is the capital Enemy of *Jesus Christ*: Their Maxims, their Commands, their Interests are contrary: We cannot serve them both together, we must break either with the one or with the other.

2. We cannot take the World's part without violating our Vows made in Baptism. When we renounced Satan and his Pomps, we engaged our selves by a solemn and religious Oath, to trample under Foot all that Worldlings esteem. What perfidiousness, what sacrilege is it, to be after this an Idolater of Vanity, and to prefer the Goods of Earth before those of Heaven!

3: The World hath nothing worth the love of an Immortal Soul: It has not even wherewith to pay those that
serve

Christian Thoughts. 75

serve it. Its Treasures, its Divertilements, its Honours may perhaps busie and embrace the Heart of Man ; but they cannot satisfie or fill it. They are, to say the truth, only false Goods, only Illusions and Shadows ; or rather, they are true Evils. They make a Man wicked, and hinder him not from being unfortunate. The most Glorious Fortune is not only vain and frail, but also burthenfome, but also full of bitterness and discontents : There are Sighings and Sufferings upon the Throne, as well as in Irons.

Pray to our Lord to destroy in you the Spirit of the World, and to give you strength to condemn the Grandeurs of this Life.

Quod Hominibus altum est, abominatio est ante Deum. Luc. 16.

What is great before the Eyes of Men, is abominable in the sight of God. D 5 Væ

76 *Christian Thoughts,*

*Vae his, qui haeserint transeuntibus,
quoniam simul transeunt. St.
Aug.*

Wo to those that cleave to
these unstable things: For
they pass away together
with them.

For the 30th Day.

Of Penitence.

1. **R**Epent, and believe the
Gospel, saith our Lord.
He joins these two things to-
gether, for to teach us that the
Austerities of Penance are in-
separable from the Profession
of Christianity. He was, du-
ring the Course of his Mortal
Life, a God of Penance, whol-
ly imployed in expiating our
Sins, for to appease the Justice
of God his Father: We must,
according to his Example, be
Men of Penance. If the Saint
of Saints has fasted, has wept,
Ec.

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Ec. what must Criminals and wicked Persons do?

2. Sin must of necessity be punished either by him that committed it, or by him against whom it was committed. Except Sinners chastise themselves here during this present time, the Divine Justice will chastise them hereafter during all Eternity. Those Sins which have not been washed away by repentant Tears, will be punished by Eternal Flames. Is it not better to weep for a while, than to burn for ever?

3. It is not sufficient for our reconciliation with God to prostrate our selves on the ground, to cover our Head with Ashes, and our whole Body with Sackcloth. If you renounce not with your whole Heart this Criminal Affection, this unjust Gain, Ec. you are an Impostor, and not a Penitent,

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tent. Prayers, Alms, Fastings, all the Macerations of the Flesh, are but the Exteriors of Christian Penance; the Hate of Sin is the Essence and Soul thereof.

Beg pardon of God, for having hitherto led a Life so opposite to the Gospel: And at the same time pray to him for Grace to live henceforward, as did the Ancient Christians at the Austerities of Penance.

Nisi pœnitentiam feceritis, omnes similiter peribitis. Luc. 13.

Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Pœnitentibus dico, Quid prodest, quia humiliamini, si non mutamini? St. Aug.

I speak to the Penitents, What avails it you to be Humbled, unless your Lives be also changed?

A N

INSTRUCTION

F O R

To prepare one's self to
Die well.

OF all the Moments of our Life, that is best Employed, wherein we prepare our selves for Death; for it is the most important of all our Affairs, as our Lord himself advertizeth us in his Gospel, saying, *Be ready, for the Hour will come on which you think not*, Mat. 24. 24. And in the Parable of the Virgins, it is said, that those who were found prepared, entred in; but

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but the others were rejected, *Mat.* 25. 10. He then that is prepared, enters into Glory; and he that is not, is rejected. Our Lord *Jesus Christ* will surprize all those that shall not be found watching, when he shall come in the Night, like a Thief that comes upon us suddenly *Mtt.* 24. 33.

In the time of the Deluge there were but Eight Persons that were prepared, and entered into the Ark for to save themselves from drowning; all the rest were surprized and drowned in the Waters, *1 Pet.* 3. 20. *Eccles.* 11. 3. We must either perish, or dispose and prepare our selves to Die well, forasmuch as Death brings immutability: Where the Tree falls, there it will abide. Now of all times, there is none less fit for to dispose our selves to Die, than the time when Death approaches; Of which
we

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we could alledge an infinity of Reasons: But the most sensible of them all is Experience, which daily sheweth us so many sudden Deaths of all sorts, whereby Persons of all Ages, Sexes, and Conditions, are surprized. These certainly are Arguments that convince both the Knowing and the Ignorant. There is not only Danger, but as it were, certainty of Ruining our selves, by deferring and delaying our Conversion until that time. Thou think'st not of it, therefore thou shalt be surprized. It is certain, that the time of Death's approach is the most troublesome and cumbersome of our Life. What shall arrive to all at the end of the World, arrives to every one in particular at the Hour of his Death; that is, a change of State, or a passing from Time to Eternity.

When

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When the poor dying Person is ready to pass out of the World, he tugs, and feels nothing: This Soul will suffer and cannot: This Breast riseseth; he is not dead, neither is he living. The little Life that is left him, is only to put him to pain. It is scarce possible that he who minds only his pain, should be in condition to dispose himself for Death. Experience sheweth us, that a sick Man is not capable of the least business; He is never more feeble, never less attentive; he knows not what resolution to take; he grieves that ever he was born; he cannot tell what will become of him. At this time there will be no longer means to redress any thing, there is no coming twice unto it. It is decreed, that all Men must once Die, and after Death Judgment. If I have not
learnt

learnt the use of my Arms before I come to the Battel, I shall not know how to fight when I must go to it, *Heb. 9. 33.* I must then exercise myself against the Combate; I must every Day prepare myself, because of the uncertainty of my Departure. *Numerus annorum incertus est,* The number of our Years is uncertain, *Job. 15.*

The reason why God hides from Man his last Day, is, that he may prepare himself every Day. The first preparation is to live well, *Luk. 12. 35.* A Man that has led an ill Life, can hardly expect a good Death. Take lighted Torches in your Hands, for to keep you from being surprized; mortifie your Senses; repress your Passions; disengage your Heart from Criminal Affections towards Creatures, during the time of your Pilgrimage;

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mage; give good Example to your Children, Domesticks, and Inferiors, *Psal.* 118. 54. For at your Death you must not only leave all, but you must also give an account of your Sins, and of those which have been committed through your ill Example, or Neglect in correcting them. We must live every Day in the midst of our Affairs, as at the beginning and end. The burning Torches which our Lord would have us carry, signifie the good Works wherewith we ought to be accompanied. He that put the Talent in the Napkin, was rejected, and cast into Darknes, as an unprofitable Servant, *Luk.* 9. 20. The Example teacheth us, that while we have time, we must employ it in good Works, as being powerful means to prepare us to Die well.

When

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When you are engaged to make some long Journey, you provide your self with all things necessary: The Journey, of Eternity is much longer, wherefore you must dispose of your Affairs. There is a time to plant, another to pluck up, and another to gather, *Eccles. 4. 12.* God has made a Bargain with Man for Life, but he has not made a Bargain for Death. The present Estate is to work, the future to be recompenced. We have the present Life only to work in, and after this life there will be no longer time to work. Let us live then to Day, as if we should die to Morrow: In Life there are some Interests, in Death, there are none. *That Man, saith St. Hierom, is no Christian, who will live one Day in such Estate, as he would not Die in.*

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A good Death is not found by chance ; many things are required of us in Health for to have it. The first is to examine well the State of our Soul in some time of the Year, (and not to expect, till the Night comes, wherein no Man can work) to the end we may speedily remedy the Disorders that are found therein. Secondly, we must make a general Confession of our Sins, if there be need thereof: For in a great Sickness, it is difficult, and morally impossible, to make a good Confession; a Man cannot without strength recal his Memory, or think upon his Conscience. Thirdly, when you go to Communion, go to it as if it were your last: For either you are an Infidel in not believing what God has said, or if you do believe him, you are very imprudent in
not

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not being obedient thereunto.

The Souldier goes to Battel, the Woman is ready to Lye in, the Merchant sets forth to Sea, they must all prepare for Death, because there is evident peril thereof: And for this purpose, many Obligations that have been omitted, must be performed. If you have an Estate, and will dispose thereof, make your Will whilst you are in Health: We are not saved by designing to do good Works, but by doing them. As thou despisest not the Grain which thou puttest in the Earth, so oughtest thou not to despise thy Body at the end of thy Life. Thus *Joseph* gave commaad to his Brethren touching his Burial, *Gen. 50. 25.* Act by Advice, and keep good Order, according to Charity and Justice:

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ffice: Pay your Debts, make Satisfaction to those you have endamaged; do Works of Mercy, Spiritual and Corporal. Chuse your self a Spiritual Guide, that has Learning, good Conscience, and Prudence. The Penitent has no less need for a Physician for his Soul, than the Patient for his Body. Be careful so to clear your Conscience, that at the last Account you may have your Discharge ready to produce in Judgment, having always that of the Apocalypse in your mind, *Et judicati sunt mortui*, And the dead are Judged, *Apoc. 10. 12.*

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